



January 22, 2019

TO: Sen. Gelser, Chair, Senate Human Services Committee and Committee Members

From: Leslie Sutton, Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition

RE: Opposition to SB 19 Developmental Disability Eligibility Changes

Sen. Gelser and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition (DD Coalition) is a group of approximately 36 organizations across Oregon that promote quality services, equality and community integration for Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families. We also have individual members who are self-advocates and family members.

Oregon is strongest when all people have the supports they need to succeed at their job, in their home and in their community. For many children and adults experiencing intellectual or developmental disabilities, DD services are the critical support that allows them to be healthy and safe, participating as contributing members of our communities - and all Oregonians benefit when this happens.

The DD Coalition opposes SB 19 for two reasons:

1. SB 19 allows DD services eligibility to be determined by rule rather than state statute which removes public oversight of this critical definition, and
2. SB 19 removes DD services eligibility for people with intellectual disabilities who have IQ scores between 71-75 and also have adaptive behavior support needs. Removing services that keep this population stable as members of their communities will shift the cost of their supports to more expensive and less appropriate service systems like hospitals, the state hospital or corrections – while creating unnecessary trauma for these Oregonians and their communities.

DD eligibility standards should have public oversight and debate for any changes.

DD Services are important in Oregon and as such, eligibility changes should involve public oversight and debate. We look to the legislature to determine and have oversight on decisions and policies involving eligibility and funding as these are the critical pieces of the DD system. The clear majority of other states agree with this logic, incorporating their developmental disability definitions into state statutes.



Removing people with IQ scores of 71-75 with adaptive behavior support needs from DD Eligibility creates unnecessary trauma and cost shifts to more expensive services.

Everyone uses supports to help them remain healthy, safe and connected to their communities. Some people use formal DD services to access the supports they need. Removing services from people with IQ scores of 71-75 who have adaptive behavior support needs will create trauma and shift costs to more expensive, less appropriate services systems. Adaptive behavior is the collection of conceptual, social, and practical skills that are learned and performed by people in their everyday lives like language and money skills, social skills and personal care skills. For decades, Oregon public policy has recognized DD services as the effective way to keep this population healthy, safe and thriving as community members.

We know that when someone loses access to DD services, they often still need support, so they must access services in less appropriate systems. They often are forced to utilize expensive crisis services in hospitals, public safety systems, etc. after the person's life has destabilized, thus creating a higher economic cost to Oregon. Crisis creates incredible trauma to the person, their family and the community as they struggle to participate in community life without adequate supports.

A workgroup is appropriate to discuss future DD eligibility standards.

Oregon's definition of developmental disability is consistent with most states across the country, and it has served our state and the community well. The current state definition of intellectual disability, combining a measure of intellectual function with a measure of adaptive behavior support needs, is also consistent with the definition established by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, and many other states. But there are ways to modernize these definitions.

Changing the eligibility standard should not be taken lightly. There is value in reviewing these definitions and considering whether they should be amended, but we believe this should occur within a public workgroup to determine what, if any, statutory changes would be most beneficial. We appreciate the support and partnership of the Office of Developmental Disability Services with the workgroup approach.

The DD Coalition supports the mandatory reporting changes in SB 19, including a planned amendment to include Oregon Family to Family Networks as mandatory abuse reporters

Everyone deserves to live free from abuse, neglect and coercion. The DD Coalition has a strong history of supporting different worker classifications to be mandatory abuse reporters. SB 19, as currently drafted, creates a "catch all" mandatory reporter category for workers who



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implement support plans. This is an efficient way to ensure that new classifications of workers are covered under this important mandate.

Although not included in the current draft but in a planned amendment, the DD Coalition also supports making employees, subcontractors and agents of the Oregon Family to Family Networks mandatory abuse reporters. This will align with the language already in their current contracts.